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**OPTIMIZING THE PROFESSIONAL ADAPTATION
PROCESS OF NOVICE TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOL
ENVIRONMENT**

**531.01 – General theory of education
Summary of the doctoral thesis in educational sciences**

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CONTENT

CONCEPTUAL POINTS OF THE WORK	4
THESIS CONTENT	9
GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	24
BIBLIOGRAPHY	27
LIST OF THE AUTHOR'S PUBLICATIONS ON THE THESIS	
TOPIC.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ANNOTATION.....	32
ANNOTATION.....	33

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

PA– Professional Adaptation
CBAM- Concerns-Based Adoption Model
CCMA- Career Construction Adaptation Model
NTs- Novice Teachers
DPA- Dimensions of Professional Adaptation
SE– School Environment
TWA - Theory of Work Adjustment (Minnesota Model)

CONCEPTUAL POINTS OF THE WORK

The topicality and importance of the topic addressed.

The modernization of the education system, inspired by contemporary pedagogical approaches from countries such as Finland, the Netherlands, and Estonia, requires increased attention to the initial training process of novice teachers. In this context, compliance with international performance standards cannot be achieved without an efficient professional support system, designed to optimize the professional adaptation of novice teachers (NTs) in the school environment, ensuring an efficient transition from university training to teaching practice. Therefore, the relevance and importance of such research is more evident than ever, given the multiple challenges faced by NTs. The phenomenon of fluctuation and school dropout among NTs represents a major problem, with long-term negative implications for the quality of teaching and the stability of the educational system. Specialized studies warn that a significant number of teachers leave the system in the first five years of their career, often due to lack of support, integration difficulties and a feeling of professional isolation [17], [28], [42], [45], [75], [76]. In this statistical framework, scientific research becomes imperative to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment. The analysis of the current situation reveals a lack of scientifically validated models and programs, designed to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTS. Also, the timeliness and importance of this research are confirmed by statistical data that highlight the difficulties encountered by NTs. *The annual report on diagnosing the current needs for qualified teachers in general education by monitoring the process of placement of graduates of study programs in the field of Educational Sciences*, 2023, states that "in the 2023 budget year, 35 novice teachers employed by assignment resigned before/immediately upon the expiration of the established term of three years of actual teaching work, of which: 34% left the system in the first year of teaching activity; 14% in the second year of teaching activity, 0% beginners left in the third year of teaching activity; 52% left the school immediately upon the expiration of the 3-year term" [76], known as the "teacher exodus" has serious consequences: 1) high financial costs for recruitment and training; 2) a decrease in the quality of the educational act, because schools are constantly faced with a lack of qualified and experienced staff; 3) increased pressure on the professional group, which has to take on additional tasks, etc. In the European context, countries such as Estonia, Latvia, the Czech Republic, etc., often cited as models in education, have invested heavily in mentoring programs and professional support for beginners [75].

Description of the research situation and identification of the research problem

National and international scientific concerns regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process emphasize the need for proactive behavior on the part of the beginner and an increased degree of flexibility and openness to progressive changes in the school environment. In the opinion of the authors M. Savickas [60], Rh. Lazarus [20], A. Rean [72], V. Negovan [24], M. Zlate [47], G. Pânișoară și I-O. Pânișoară [30], O. Paladi [27], Vl.

Guțu [16], N. Silistraru [38], E. Puzur [33], M. Pleșca [32], E. Țarnă [42] etc., the optimization of the professional adaptation process is approached as a multidimensional construct, implying “the debutant’s capacity to successfully cross the transition” [59]. Numerous authors include multiple dimensions of professional adaptation in the construct: *emotional and physical well-being at work* (Rh. Lazarus [20], M. Seligman [36], C. Cooper [51], D. Goleman [15], M. Cojocaru-Borozan [9], T. Șova [39], etc.), *adaptation to the culture of the school environment* (W. Jackson [55], N. Schlossberg [62], E. Schein [61], F. Davis [52], M. Jigău [19], E. Țarnă [41], E. Losii [22], etc.); *congruence between personality and environmental demands* (SH Osipow [57], C. Ostroff [58], G. Lemeni [21], V. Negovan [24], V. Gh. Cojocaru and V. Cojocaru [8], etc.); *interpersonal relationships, socialization and communication* (N. Schlossberg, E. Wawrs, J. Goodman [63], TN Bauer [49], T. Rudică [34], E. Păun [29], N. Silistraru [37], L. Sadovei [35], N. Ovcerenco [26], C. Zagaievschi [46]), etc. Therefore, scientific approaches define professional adaptation as an active process in which the novice adapts to the specifics of a work environment, by affiliation with the organizational culture. In this context, scientific contributions from the Republic of Moldova on professional adaptation are distinguished by their significant relevance, directly addressing the specific needs of novice teachers: L. Grishanov and V. Tsurkan studied “the problems of social adaptation of first-year students” [71]; M. Pleșca analyzed “the fundamental psychological mechanisms that influence students’ adaptation to learning activity” [32]; E. Țarnă investigated “the impact of various problems on the adaptation process of students in the university environment” [40]; E. Puzur established “a correlation between the personality traits of first-year students and their psychosocial adaptation process” [33]; O. Paladi investigated “value orientations and psychosocial adaptation in adolescence, with implications for the transition to professional life” [27]. Other researchers have emphasized the need to extend the study of adaptation beyond certain disciplines on the methodological and interdisciplinary dimension: N. Bucun, S. Mustață, V. Guțu and Gh. Rudic stating that, “although adaptation has been intensively researched in biology, psychology and medicine, studies in pedagogy remain insufficient” [4], a finding that confirms the relevance and importance of the research.

The issue of professional adaptation in the school environment has become a central concern for researchers in Romania. M. Jigău's research is relevant in the context of optimizing the professional adaptation process, having a significant contribution in the fields of career mentoring, highlighting the need for “adaptation strategies to correspond to progressive changes in the labor market” [19]. Following this direction, researchers M. Zlate and V. Negovan made a significant contribution, researching fundamental issues in psychology and pedagogy, proposing “adaptation strategies specific to the university environment” [48]. V. Negovan analyzed “congruence, adjustment and adaptation in career” [24]. A remarkable contribution is also made by the author S. Făt, stating that “adaptation to the new profession occurs when a language and a culture become strongly legitimized through access to existing resources” [14]. With the idea of making human resources management

more efficient, G. Pănișoară and IO. Pănișoară investigated essential elements of professional integration and adaptation [30]. An important contribution in the field is also made by E. Păun, who “described four stages of the professional development of the beginner in his first year of activity” [28]. These studies emphasize the importance of proactive adaptation, providing a solid information base for research on optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment. Based on the analysis of the specialized literature, *we find a lack of research on optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment, the lack of a proactive pedagogical Model and a mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment*, all together justify **the reason for choosing the research topic**.

The analysis of the theoretical and practical framework allowed us to identify **contradictions**:

- the contradiction between the need to find effective solutions to the problems of professional adaptation of NTs and the absence of an effective theoretical and methodological framework for optimizing this process in the school environment;
- the contradiction between preventing professional maladaptation and the lack of implementation of a methodology for assessing the level of professional adaptation of temporary workers in the school environment;
- the contradiction between the urgent need to provide mentoring support for effective professional adaptation and the lack of a proactive pedagogical model and a program to optimize the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment.

The contradictions exposed have outlined **the research problem**, which consists in formulating the answer to the following questions: 1) What are the effective theoretical and methodological foundations and what conceptual model can be designed to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment?; 2) How can an integrated methodology be implemented and validated to evaluate and optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment?; 3) What mentoring models and programs can be implemented to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment?

Research purpose consists of the theoretical and methodological conceptualization, development and validation of the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment*.

Research objectives:

1. Epistemological analysis and identification of theoretical and methodological benchmarks regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment.
2. Evaluation and synthesis of support models and mentoring practices to optimize the professional adaptation process of temporary workers in the school environment.

3. Conceptualization and design of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model to optimize the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment*.
4. Experimental investigation of the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment.
5. Validation of the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*.

General hypothesis of the research: the optimization of the professional adaptation process in the school environment will be achieved if novice teachers benefit from a *Proactive Pedagogical Model* and the implementation of a *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*.

Theoretical and scientific support of the research is based on theoretical approaches and concepts from educational sciences, organizational psychology, career psychology and sociology. These are confirmed by the comparative analysis of strategic and normative documents: the National Development Strategy “*European Moldova 2030*” [78] and the *Education Code of the Republic of Moldova* [74], the *European Commission Report “Teachers’ Careers in Europe*” [75 etc. The research was carried out on epistemic, theoretical and methodological coordinates based on: the analysis of the concepts of *adaptation, professional adaptation, optimization of professional adaptation* (R. Doron and F. Parot [13], J.A. Simons et al. [65], O. Paladi [27], E. Țărnă [40] etc.); *factors, dimensions and indicators of professional adaptation* (Rh. Lazarus [20], M. Savickas [59], M. Cojocaru-Borozan, E. Țărnă, L. Sadovei [10], T. Șova [39], A. Puzur [33] etc.); *adjustment, transition and affiliation in optimizing the professional adaptation process* (D. Super and E. Knasel [66], S. Osipov [57], M. Jigău [19], V. Negovan, M. Dincă [25]); *the congruence between the personality of the novice teacher and the school environment and the stages of professional adaptation* (F. Davis [52], E. Păun [28], G. Lemeni and O. Negru [21], V. Gh. Cojocaru and V. Cojocaru [8]), *models, mentoring practices and strategies for optimizing the professional adaptation process* (L. Muntean-Trif [23], A. Coulon [68], A. Rean [72], J.C. Hetu, M. Lavoie [69], A. Afanas [1], V. Negovan [24], V. Andrițchi [2], E. Țărnă [40], C. Ostroff and S. Kozlowski [58]).

Methods applied in research: *theoretical methods* (scientific documentation, comprehensive and comparative analysis, synthesis, generalization, systematization and theoretical modeling); *praxiological methods* (pedagogical experiment of observation, training and control, direct observation, interview, questioning); *hypothetico-deductive method of interpreting and evaluating statistical data* (graphic representation and identification of correlations between groups of indicators, determination of the Pearson correlation coefficient, statistical analysis according to IBM Corp. Released 2023. IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 29.0.2.0 Armonk, NY).

The scientific novelty and originality of the research is objectified by: determining the theoretical and methodological foundations from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment; designing

the *Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*; developing, implementing and validating the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*.

Main scientific results submitted for support consist of epistemological analysis and identification of theoretical and methodological benchmarks regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs; conceptualization and design of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*; evaluation and synthesis of support models and mentoring practices regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment; experimental determination of the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment and validation of the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*.

The scientific problem solved in the thesis consists of optimizing the process of professional adaptation of the NTs in the school environment through the theoretical and methodological foundation of a proactive pedagogical model and a mentoring program.

Theoretical value of the research is justified by: defining the concept of optimizing the professional adaptation process; comparative analysis of national and international policies for the optimal professional adaptation of teachers; identifying the theoretical benchmarks necessary to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment; conceptualizing and designing the *Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*; identifying the 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA) and specific indicators for each dimension; evaluating and synthesizing support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment; developing the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment*.

The applied value of research is argued by: ascertaining the level of professional adaptation in relation to the pre-established dimensions and indicators; establishing the categories of resistance to progressive change in the school environment and correlating them with the level of professional adaptation; experimental investigation of the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment; applying evaluation methods and professional adaptation strategies; validating the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment*.

Implementation of scientific results was carried out as part of the pedagogical experiment, it took place between 2022 and 2025 and was organized in general education institutions in 16 districts and 2 municipalities of the Republic of Moldova. The experimental group included 117 respondents: 97 NTs without professional experience; 20 mentors, with an experience of at least 5 years.

Approval of research results. The research results were discussed and approved during the meetings of the thesis coordination committee, methodological seminars, international and national scientific conferences, through scientific publications on the research topic, through lectures and trainings, public lessons held at training courses within the *Professional Training Program with the participation of teaching and managerial staff* who implement the curriculum for the optional subject *Health Education* in general education institutions in the country.

Publications on the topic of the thesis. The essential content of the thesis was reflected in 16 scientific papers (1 specialized methodological guide and 15 articles published in specialized journals and proceedings at national-level conferences in the Republic of Moldova and international-level conferences in Romania, Ukraine).

The volume and structure of the thesis. The thesis includes annotations (Romanian, English), list of abbreviations, list of tables, list of figures, introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, 163 bibliographical sources, 7 annexes and is presented on 145 pages of basic text, 10 tables, 27 figures.

Keywords: *optimization, adaptation, professional adaptation, novice teachers, school environment, mentor, mentoring, dimensions of professional adaptation, factors, indicators, optimization of the professional adaptation process.*

THESIS CONTENT

The **Introduction** argues the motivation, the topicality of the research topic, formulates the purpose, objectives and hypothesis, states the theoretical support of the research, presents the novelty and scientific originality of the research on optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment.

In chapter 1, *Optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers – epistemological benchmarks*, the conceptual framework of the research is analyzed and generalized. Numerous definitions are analyzed, highlighting specific issues related to the multidimensionality of optimizing the professional adaptation process. The syncretism of concepts regarding *the optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers* is due both to the postmodern scientific reality, which is expressed by the notions related to adaptation, and to the reconstruction of the ways of approaching the career transition. The term **optimization** was explained by D. Hameiline, A. El Ahmadi [apud 13], L. Vigotski [44], U. Bronfenbrenner and P. Morris [50], etc. *Optimization* represents “the selection and implementation of the most efficient economic solutions from a set of alternatives”, “to improve”, “to make optimal”, “to meet increased demands”, meaning “the set of operational research works that aims to find the best solution to solve a certain problem” [3]. In the context of our research, *optimization represents the process of choosing and implementing the most efficient professional adaptation strategy from a series of available options*. This involves the use of analytical methods and a strategic approach to identify the best path to follow in order to overcome professional adaptation difficulties. In addition, professional adaptation involves

a continuous development of skills, experience and opportunities, in order to ensure a successful professional path. In this context, **the optimization of the professional adaptation process** does not only refer to economic aspects, but also to those of professional adaptation, development and change, being a dynamic and continuous process of self-assessment and improvement, which allows the NTs to reach its maximum potential in career. The definition of optimization refers to the idea of “efficient action”, valuing “the action of optimizing and its result”, applying “actions to do something optimally, to improve, enhance or perfect” [7], [12], [31]. Thus, after analyzing the various definitions of the term “optimization”, we synthesize a fundamental explanation for our research: *optimization is an action to improve the professional adaptation process, making the efficiency of the result visible from various perspectives*. We note that the *optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*, being a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon, requires a multidimensional analysis, focusing both on the changes that occur at the level of the subject of adaptation and at the level of the adaptogenic context. The concept of *adaptation* has been analyzed from various research perspectives (pedagogical, psychological, sociological, biological, physiological, medical, etc.). These approaches have contributed substantially to explaining the phenomenon, complementing each other and providing a complex picture of the *optimization of the professional adaptation process*. We believe that *the optimization of the professional adaptation process depends on the ability of the NTs to change their behavior* so as to respond effectively to difficult situations, to secure their position and ensure long-term career development. In a general sense, professional adaptation is a dynamic process through which beginners shape their behavior and cognitive resources to cope with daily challenges and demands, as stated by JA Simons, S. Kalichman and JA Santrock [65], R. Doron and F. Parot [13], V. Negovan [24], E. Țărnă [42], [43], M. Cojocaru-Borozan, E. Țărnă, L. Sadovei [10], etc. The totality of the opinions of the mentioned authors allows us to *deduce that the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment is multidimensional and is conditioned by a diversity of factors and indicators*.

The chapter presents a comparative analysis of national and international policies for optimal professional adaptation of NTs in the school environment, highlighting the experiences of other countries regarding the implementation of mentoring programs for this purpose. The comparative analysis of national and international educational policies allowed us to identify good practices regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs and to assess their relevance for the local educational context (National Development Strategy “European Moldova 2030” [78], Education Code of the Republic of Moldova” [74], Regulation on mentoring activity [77], European Commission Report “Teaching careers in Europe” [75], etc.). We have established that the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment depends on the NTs’ ability to cope with progressive changes, but also on the implementation of a consolidated action plan, having a formative and supportive nature necessary to proactively respond to adaptive demands. The analysis of experiences from European countries demonstrates that the transfer of good

practices is fundamental for optimizing the process of professional adaptation of NTs in the school environment.

Chapter 1 summarizes the theoretical guidelines, analyzing the dimensions necessary to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment, such as:

- Trait and factor-based theory (F. Parsons) - provides a useful framework for optimizing the professional adaptation of NTs, emphasizing mentoring programs and "personality-profession congruence";
- Vocational personality theory (John L. Holland) - emphasizes the importance of "individual differences" and the analysis of the affiliation of the NTs to the specifics of the school environment culture;
- Career development theory (D. Super) - describes both the importance of the stages in which the individual adapts during transition, as well as the way in which progressive change is perceived; we consider it important to correlate the stages of professional development with perspectives for optimizing the professional adaptation process;
- Social-cognitive career theory (RW Lent, SD Brown and G. Hackett, S. Osipov, etc.) - explains how newcomers make career decisions and how they develop their professional paths;
- Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA), R. Dawis and L. Lofquist [53]) - analysis of the importance of the interaction between the individual and the work environment, understanding individual-environment congruence, predicting job satisfaction and analyzing professional performance during transition;
- Constructivist theory (M. Savickas [60]) - proposes the creation of a framework in which beginners should be able to actively build their professional knowledge and skills. The optimization of the professional adaptation process focuses on the ability of NTs to be flexible and open to progressive changes in the school environment.

For a holistic understanding of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment, 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA) were analyzed, establishing the specific factors and indicators that directly influence the specific area of professional adaptation: *DPA1. Emotional and physical well-being at work; DPA2. Adaptation to the culture of the school environment; DPA3. Professional satisfaction; DPA4. Perceived professional competence; DPA5. Effective interpersonal relationships; DPA6. Adaptation to changes during the transition period; DPA7. Professional involvement and commitment; DPA8. Self-reflection and personal development.* Arguments were made about the complexity of professional adaptation, demonstrating that difficulties arising on a certain dimension (e.g., *DPA1. Emotional well-being*) can negatively affect other dimensions of adaptation (e.g., *DPA2. Adaptation to the culture of the school environment*).

In chapter 2, *Methodological considerations regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*, The specifics of professional adaptation in the school environment are analyzed, describing the reality to which NTs must adhere. The optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs is an essential pillar for ensuring the quality of the educational process and the sustainability of the education system in the R.

of Moldova. In this regard, we find conclusive findings in the author E. Păun [28], who considers that "often, adaptation to new professional requirements involves the progressive abandonment of professional illusions built on the basis of the ideal student, described and inoculated during the initial training period." In our opinion, this statement goes beyond a simple psychoanalytic observation; it emphasizes the deep emotional dimension of professional adaptation difficulties, as they are not only practical challenges, but also a state of discomfort, nervousness, frustration, anxiety or even exhaustion, which affects the well-being of the NTs, as mentioned by the authors of Rh. Lazarus [20], A. Rean [72], V. Negovan [24], M. Zlate [47], E. Țărnă [43], O. Paladi [27], M. Savickas [59] etc.

The chapter includes an analysis of assessment methods and professional adaptation strategies, presenting various models and good practices to support the optimization of this process. The chapter also addresses two essential aspects. On the one hand, the methods necessary to objectively assess the level of professional adaptation of the NTs are explored. On the other hand, some effective professional adaptation strategies are identified, which will constitute the basis for the development of a training program. Certainly, the methods for assessing the level of professional adaptation of the NTs are varied and can be classified into several categories, from quantitative to qualitative. In our understanding, a qualitative approach combines several methods to obtain a real overview. Starting from the findings of theorists and practitioners, the most common methods for assessing the level of professional adaptation are based on self-reflection, direct or indirect observation [2], [30], [61]. The research conducted by Rh. Lazarus emphasizes two types of evaluation methods [20]:

- *primary assessment* – it is considered whether the occurrence of an event or situation affects the individual's well-being (the relevance of the situation for goals, personality-environment congruence and form of involvement are analyzed);
- *secondary assessment* – refers to existing adaptation strategies (actions that determine or could prevent maladaptation, blaming or appreciating someone, adaptive potential and expectations for the future are analyzed).

We mention that Rh. Lazarus establishes "an intrinsic and dynamic correlation between the assessment methods and the adaptation strategies used by the individual" [Ibidem, p.188]. This connection is not unilateral, but rather a continuous cycle, in which the initial perception of the event influences the choice of strategies, and their success or failure, in turn, can optimize or not the professional adaptation process. Detailing and concretizing, we emphasize that *the primary assessment establishes both the level of professional adaptation and the dynamics of optimization*. In turn, professional adaptation strategies, once implemented, can be evaluated to measure their impact on optimizing the professional adaptation process. According to the authors A. Rean and A. Cudașov [73], "the assessment of the level of professional adaptation should not be perceived only as a measurement process, but as a diagnostic tool". In this sense, by applying quantitative and qualitative evaluation methods, the mentor can identify the needs and strengths of the NTs, as well as the difficulties they face. In this regard, the assessment of the beginner's level of adaptation, the acceptance of the mentor and the quality of the adaptation strategies are determining factors in the success of optimizing the professional adaptation process of the NTs in the school environment.

Because *professional adaptation strategies require a high capacity for self-regulation*, we consider important the 4 resources proposed by M. Savickas, often called “the 4 Cs” [60]: 1) *awareness* – refers to the concern for the future and the ability to look ahead and prepare for future events. It involves proactive planning of future transitions with a hopeful attitude. It is essential for optimizing the adaptation process; 2) *control* – represents the ability to assume responsibility for shaping one’s own person and professional environment. This involves the use of self-discipline, sustained effort and persistence in the face of challenges. It involves assuming responsibility for optimizing the professional adaptation process, career development and decision-making; 3) *curiosity* – is manifested by openness to exploring alternative possibilities and scenarios, as well as by the ability to imagine oneself in different professional situations and roles. This active strategy generates new aspirations and directions, encouraging the exploration of congruence; 4) *Confidence* – refers to the belief in one’s own ability to update one’s chosen professional path, dynamizing the optimization of the professional adaptation process. Confidence is built through the experiences accumulated in the processes of exploration and information search, strengthening the feeling of competence and personal efficacy in the adaptation process. In our opinion, these four strategic resources are interconnected and influence each other, actively contributing to the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment. Professional adaptation strategies are varied and interconnected, including approaches: *cognitive* (cognitive restructuring, future-oriented thinking, problem solving) [8], [16], [18], [21], [64], [70], *emotional* (emotional regulation through mindfulness, reframing, flexible communication) [7], [9], [20], [30], *behavioral* (social learning, proactive skill development) [5], [11], [19], *proactive* (identification of stressors, planning, self-reflection) [39], [16], [17], [52]. Referring to the applicability of professional adaptation strategies, we note that optimizing the process of effective professional adaptation requires a diverse set of individual strategies, which can be classified into cognitive, emotional, behavioral and proactive categories. These strategies allow the NTs to successfully affiliate to the progressive changes and challenges of the school environment. We deduce that an optimized professional adaptation process is based on a continuous cycle of assessment-support-evaluation. A solution towards the implementation of emotional and psychological support mechanisms integrated into mentoring programs is proposed by S. Făt [14], who emphasizes the importance of implementing the following *categories of support for the NTs*: 1) *informational support* - providing clear information about the education system, educational policies and strategic directions at the school and system level; 2) *support for teaching resources and materials* - ensuring access to instructions and opportunities to experiment with various teaching resources and materials; 3) *emotional support* - creating a positive environment, based on the attention and affection of colleagues; 4) *support for classroom management* - advising the novice on issues of order, discipline and classroom organization. Relevant for understanding the support needed to optimize the professional

adaptation process is the *explanatory-interpretative model of the employee in the organizational environment*, proposed by E. Schein [61] - which emphasizes that professional adaptation is not a singular event, but a dynamic and continuous process, strongly influenced by the interaction between the newcomer and the organizational culture. The model contains three essential stages - *renunciation*, *cognitive change* and *reinforcement* - through which the newcomer abandons his old habits, acquires new knowledge and behaviors, and, finally, integrates them into his new professional identity. The mentor's support is fundamental. The mentor establishes a supportive and open relationship with the new employee: 1) responds to the needs and expectations of professional adaptation; 2) strengthens the professional identity; 3) emotionally supports the newcomer; 4) values collaboration; 4) develops the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process. Another model regarding effective professional adaptation practices is the *Concerns-Based Adoption Model* (CBAM), proposed by Hall and Hord [54], which emphasizes the “human element of progressive change”, not just the technical or logistical aspects. The model transforms the adaptation process from a passive event to an active and managed process, centered on the NTS, increasing the chances of professional success. Through this model, the mentor can: 1) *diagnose the level of professional adaptation and support needs*; 2) *personalize interventions* (for example, instead of applying a superficial approach, the mentor provides personalized support); 3) *monitor progress* (for example, the mentor monitors the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process, aiming for the newcomers to work from lower-level concerns to higher-level ones).

Next, various models and support practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process were analyzed: *The explanatory-interpretative model of the employee in the organizational environment*, *the model of adoption based on concerns*, the adaptation model proposed by Rh. Lazarus and S. Folkman, *the career construction adaptation model* (CCMA), *Theory of Work Adjustment* (TWA), constituting a valuable framework for the development of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers* (Fig. 1), aiming to valorize the structural components and create favorable perspectives for optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs. *The Proactive Pedagogical Model of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers* (Fig. 1) is not a rigid set of rules, but a flexible system that adjusts according to the evolution of the context and the needs for professional adaptation of NTs. The proactive pedagogical model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of the NTs conveys a modern and strategic approach, as it does not wait for the problems of professional maladaptation to arise and then be solved (*reactive approach*). The objectives of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* focus on the prevention of maladaptation (identifying the level of professional adaptation of the NTs), planning and continuous support (proactive approach).

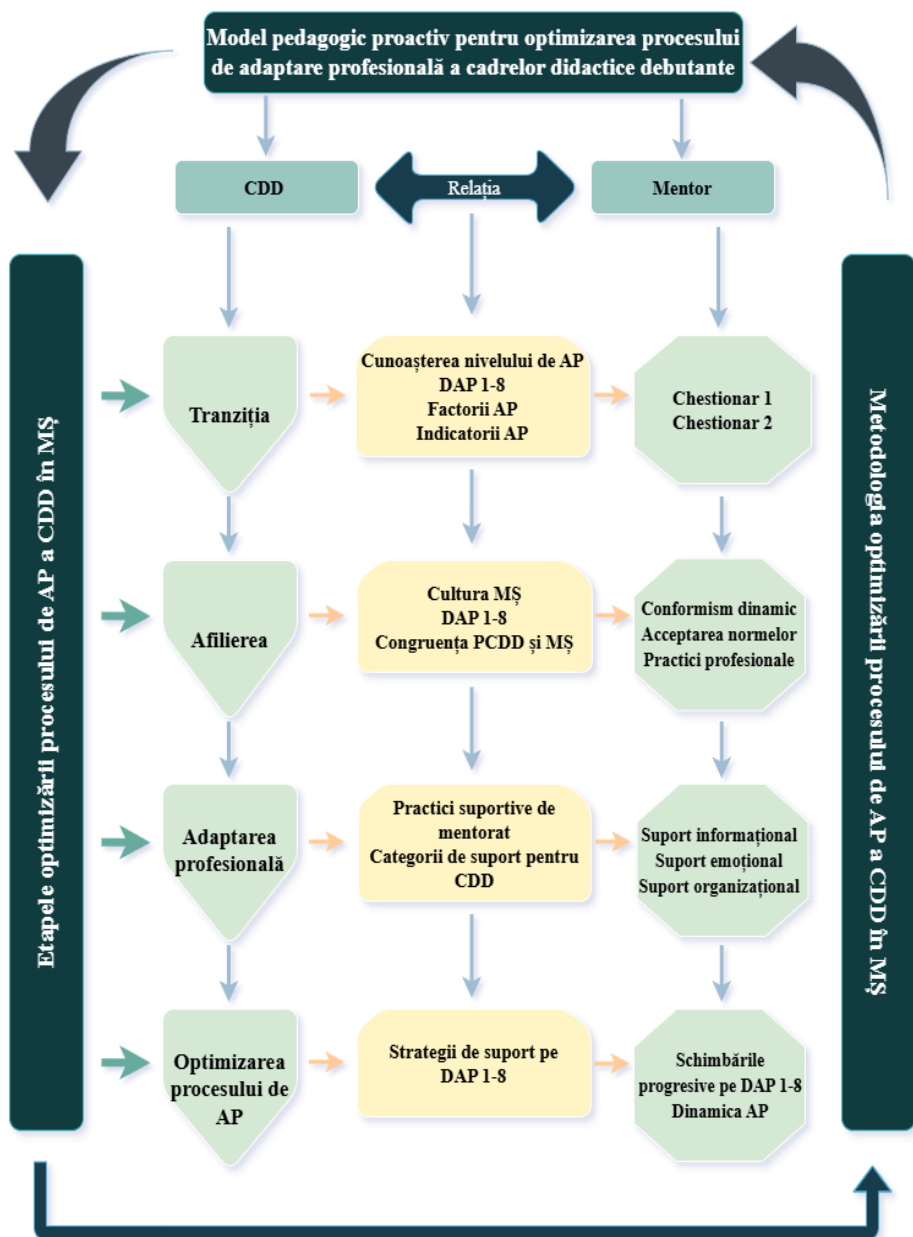


Figure 1. Proactive pedagogical model of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs

The proactive pedagogical model of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers (Fig.1) contains 4 stages: *transition* (initial period of adaptation to the new environment), *affiliation* (acceptance of the cultural identity of the school environment), *professional adaptation* (establishment of mentoring objectives for professional adaptation) and *optimization of the professional adaptation process* (progressive and dynamic change of the professional adaptation process), all of which are interdependent and have an important role in optimizing the professional adaptation of the NTs in the school environment. *The proactive pedagogical model* provides a guiding framework "scaffolding" (the concept of "cognitive scaffolding" proposed by L. Vygotsky[67]), allowing the NTs to optimize their professional adaptation progressively, from simple to complex, with the support of a mentor. At the beginning, the mentor provides clear, structured instructions and direct support for basic tasks. This is the initial "scaffolding", which helps the NTs to become familiar with the fundamental elements and concepts of the model. As the NTs gains confidence and masters the basic skills, the mentor gradually reduces the level of intervention. The NTS takes more initiative and responsibility, and the mentor moves from offering solutions to following up on progressive changes (proactive approach). The components of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* constituted a solid theoretical and practical basis for the development of the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*.

In chapter 3, *Optimizing the adaptation of novice teachers in the school environment – an experimental approach*, the sample and experimental design are presented, describing in detail the research instruments. The results of the observational experiment are analyzed and presented graphically, providing solid arguments for the development and implementation of the *Mentoring Program*, aiming to optimize the process of professional adaptation of NTs in the school environment. The research in the study was organized on the basis of a classic pedagogical experiment, carried out in primary, secondary and high school educational institutions in the Republic of Moldova, with the involvement of mentors and novice teachers. **The pedagogical experiment** was carried out between 2022 and 2025 and included three successive stages: observation (2022-2023), training (2023-2024) and validation (2024-2025). **The experimental group** included 117 respondents, distributed as follows: 20 mentors, with an experience of at least 5 years, who participated only in the formative experiment, and 97 temporary teachers, without professional experience. **The purpose of the observation experiment** is to identify the dimensions and indicators that influence the optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment. To determine the level of professional adaptation of the NTs in the school environment, Questionnaire 1 was applied. *Evaluation of the level of professional adaptation in relation to the dimensions and pre-established indicators* (Translated and validated by E. Țărnă after AA Rean and AP Cudașev [73]. We specify that based on the specialized literature and the questions in Questionnaire 1, 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA) were identified along with the pre-established indicators for each of them.

We note that 1 point was awarded for each answer, having a scoring key for the 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA) and the pre-established indicators for each of them. We specify that the analysis of emotional and physical well-being at work (DPA1) focuses on how the NTs manages their emotional state, stress and fatigue in the professional environment (Fig. 2.).

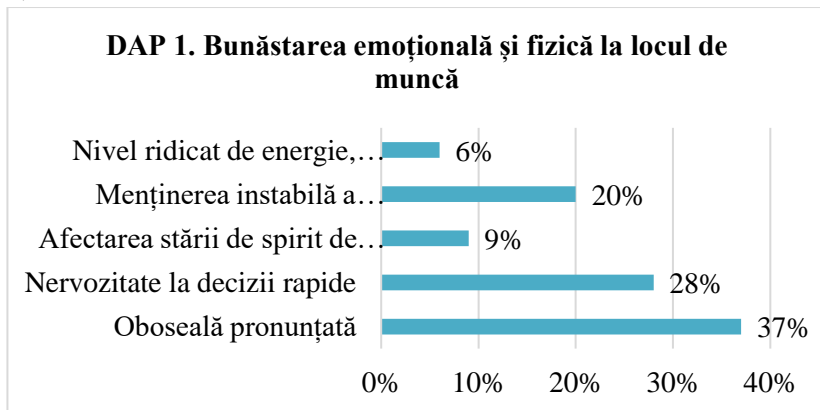


Figure 2. Frequency distribution of indicators on DPA 1. “Emotional and physical well-being at work” (observational experiment)

Based on the scoring algorithm obtained on DPA1. "Emotional and physical well-being at work" in relation to the nominated indicators, we observe that a significant percentage of NTs *feel intense fatigue at work* (37%). Comparing the data presented in Fig. 2 allows us to find that *almost a third of respondents* (28%) *feel nervous when they have to make quick decisions*. We find that a small percentage (9%), but still significant, indicates that the difficulties encountered at work affect their mood, having a negative impact on optimizing the professional adaptation process, and a fifth of NTs (20%) have difficulties in maintaining their calm in difficult situations and only a small percentage (6%) indicate a positive level of emotional and physical well-being, considering them difficulties for optimizing the professional adaptation process.

In the context of the ascertainment experiment, the analysis of *adaptation to the school environment culture* (DPA2.) explores the extent to which newcomers understand and internalize the norms, values, and rules specific to the school. Analyzing the results for DPA2. “Adaptation to the school environment culture” (Figure 3), we observe that 18% of the NTs feel a sense of exclusion, and 16% compare themselves to the expectations of others. The results obtained indicate a significant percentage of respondents who feel somewhat marginalized, isolated, or concerned about how they are perceived by their peers. The ascertainment analysis of the data presented in the figure demonstrates that 12% of the NTs have difficulties in relating and collaborating with peers and another 12% are dependent on the appreciation of others, giving particular importance to validation from peers.

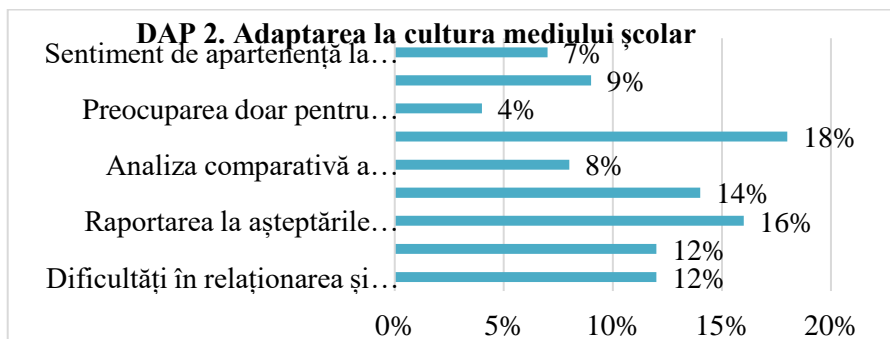


Figure 3. Frequency distribution of indicators on DPA2. “Adaptation to the culture of the school environment” (observational experiment)

We find that *14% of NTs have difficulty asking for help*. The results obtained reflect a reluctance to ask for support, either out of fear of appearing vulnerable or out of a lack of confidence in the mentor's availability or in the ability of colleagues to provide the necessary support. The data presented in Fig. 3 indicate that *9% of NTs correctly understand the norms in the school environment* and only *7% have a sense of belonging to the professional group*. The results given indicate that beginners have difficulty fully understanding the norms and professional culture in the school environment, being devoid of a strong sense of belonging to the teaching community. Next, Fig. 4 illustrates the results of comparing the values regarding the indicators nominated for *adaptation to progressive changes* (DPA6).

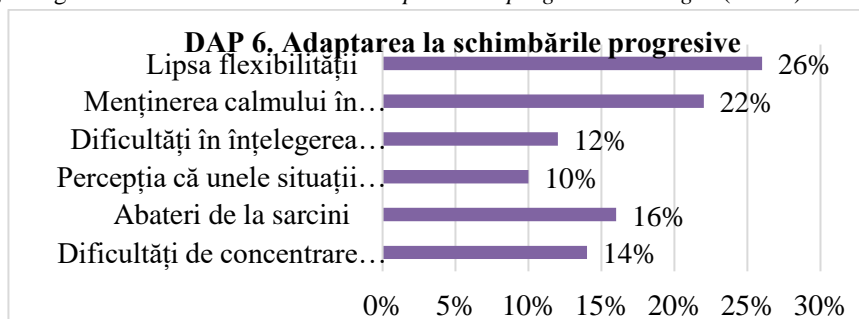


Figure 4. Frequency distribution of indicators on DPA6. “Adaptation to changes in the transition period” (observational experiment)

The statistical results presented in Fig. 4 demonstrate that *the lack of flexibility and the difficulty of maintaining calm in difficult situations represent the most significant difficulties in adapting to the changes that occurred during the transition period*. It was determined that *26% of the NTs are not flexible, have difficulties in adapting to new situations, requirements or organizational changes*, *22% of the respondents cannot be calm in tense situations*, *14% of the NTs have difficulties in concentrating on the new*, and *12% have difficulties in understanding the decisions of the management*. Next, to *establish the categories of resistance to progressive change in the school environment and correlate them*

with the level of professional adaptation and to accumulate the ascertainable material regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment, we included in the set of research tools Questionnaire 2. *Professional adaptation to progressive changes in the school environment*, adapted and validated by E. Țărnă after A. Chelcea [6]). Through logical deduction and comparative interpretation of the data, we grouped the *categories of resistance to progressive change* according to their impact on the level of professional adaptation. Thus, *the lower the resistance to progressive change, the higher the level of professional adaptation and vice versa* (Fig.5).

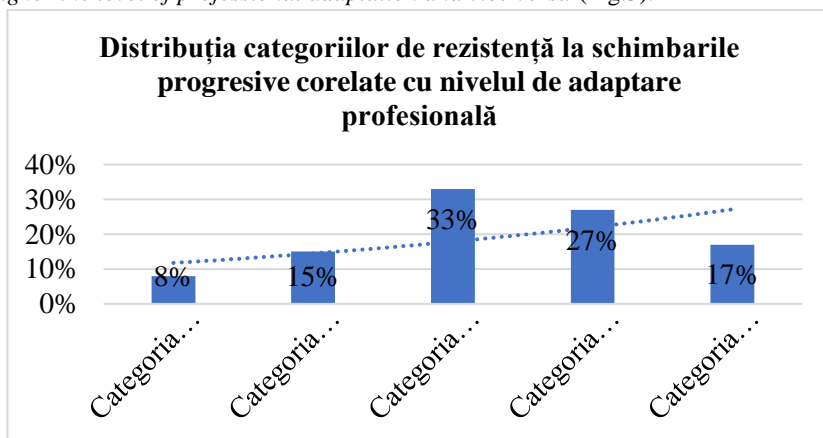


Figure 5. Distribution of categories of resistance to progressive changes correlated with the level of professional adaptation (observational experiment)

The study conducted and the comparative analysis confirm the following synthesized distribution (Fig. 5 and Fig. 6): 1) Category I. (8%) + Category II. (15%) = 23% - *High level of professional adaptation*; 2) Category III. (33%) = 33% - *Medium level of professional adaptation*; 3) Category IV. (27%) + Category V. (17%) = 44% - *Low level of professional adaptation*.

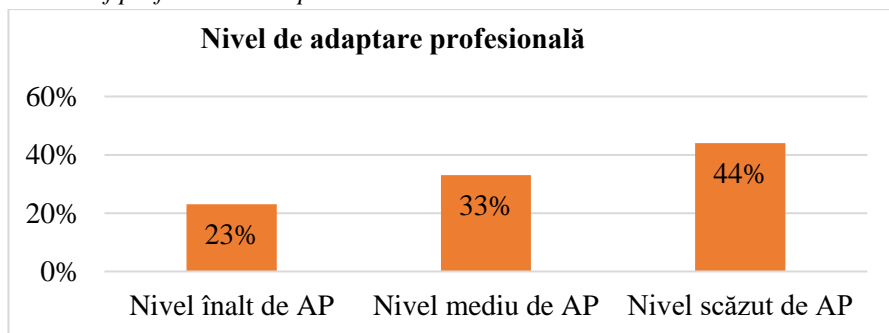


Figure 6. Distribution of professional adaptation level (observational experiment)

Using the evaluation scale from 1 to 5, where the level of professional adaptation (PA) was classified as: *low level of PA* (with a threshold/representative value of <1.5), *medium level of PA* (with a threshold/representative value of ≤ 2.00) and *high level of PA* (with a threshold/representative value of ≥ 2.50). Therefore, the findings provide a clear picture of the *low level of professional adaptation of NTs in the school environment* (44%), highlighting the imperative of implementing a *Mentoring Program*. We find that only a small part of the NTs are with a high level of professional adaptation (23%), totaling 8% of Category I and 15% of Category II, demonstrating minimal or low resistance to progressive changes in the school environment, but even in these categories there are some difficulties aimed at optimizing the professional adaptation process.

Chapter 3 includes a description of the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment*. The mentoring program is based on the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* (Fig.1). **The goal of the Mentoring Program** is to optimize the professional adaptation process of the NTs in the school environment. **Mentoring program** includes a *detailed description of the mentor selection process, the work portfolio model, the "Analysis Matrix for Optimizing the Professional Adaptation Process for Mentors", "Grid for Optimizing the Professional Adaptation of NTs in the School Environment", "Thematic Structure of Mentoring Sessions, Correlated with the 8 DPAs and Pre-established Indicators"*. 20 mentors, teachers with a minimum of 5 years of experience, selected based on predefined criteria, participated in the formative experiment. In order to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment on the pre-established dimensions and indicators, 20 workshops were organized for 20 mentors and 97 NTs, included in the Mentoring Program.

The control experiment was carried out in order to validate the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*. The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the results represented in Fig. 7 highlights the positive changes that occurred after the implementation of the *Mentoring Program* on DPA1. "Emotional and physical well-being at work".

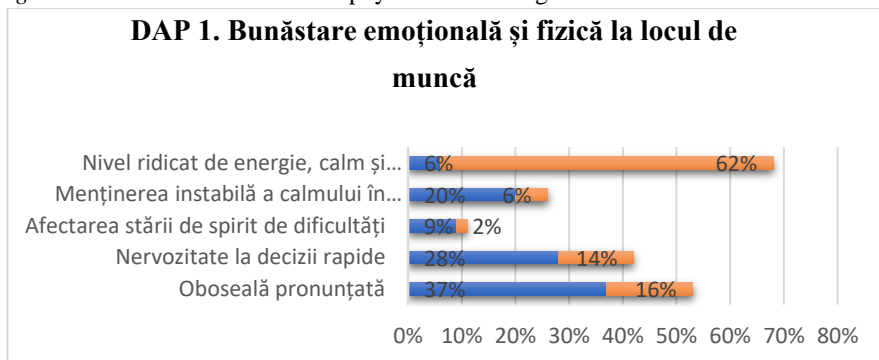


Figure 7. Comparative frequency distribution of indicators on DPA1. "Emotional and physical well-being at work"

The post-training results demonstrate substantial changes for all indicators on DPA1. "Emotional and physical well-being at work". In this regard, the prevalence of *pronounced fatigue decreased significantly, reaching from 37% to 16%*. This decrease highlights the effectiveness of the mentor's interventions, which targeted professional adaptation strategies by providing individual support, thus contributing to optimizing the professional adaptation process and alleviating initial difficulties. Similarly, *nervousness when making quick decisions registered a considerable decrease, being present in only 14% of the NTs compared to 28% recorded in the observation experiment*. In this context, the most significant indicator of the effectiveness of the Mentoring Program is the *exponential increase in the percentage of NTs who registered a high level of energy, calm and emotional resilience, from 6% to 62%*. These results demonstrate a substantial positive impact of the Mentoring Program on the emotional and physical well-being at work of the NTs.

The comparative analysis of the results in Fig. 8 allows us to conclude that, following the application of the Mentoring Program, significant changes occurred, demonstrating a marked improvement in the optimization of the professional adaptation process of the NTs in the school environment. From what is shown in Fig. 8, we note that in the observation experiment, *18% of the NTs felt a sense of exclusion, and 16% related excessively to the expectations of others*. These percentages indicated a significant concern with the perception of colleagues and a risk of marginalization. After the mentor's intervention, we observe a significant decrease in these indicators: *the feeling of exclusion dropped to 2%, and excessive reporting to the expectations of others decreased to 4%*. This substantial decrease emphasizes the role of mentoring in building a supportive environment, facilitating the optimization of the professional adaptation process of the NTS in the school environment.

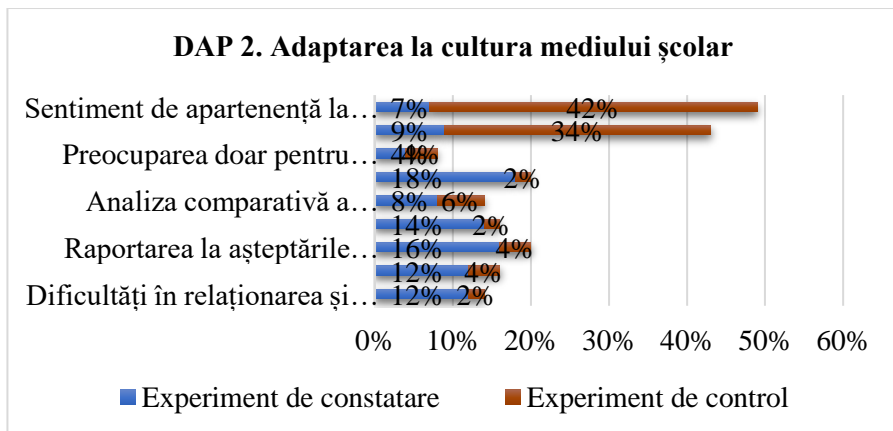


Figure 8. Comparative distribution of the frequency of indicators on DPA2. "Adaptation to the culture of the school environment"

Also, the comparative analysis of the data demonstrates a significant improvement in relational difficulties. The percentage of NTs who had difficulties in relating and collaborating with colleagues decreased from 12% to 2%. Similarly, dependence on peer appreciation decreased from 12% to 4%. These positive changes indicate that the Mentoring Program facilitated the development of communication and interaction skills, contributing to the building of collaborative professional relationships and the streamlining of professional adaptation in the work group.

The comparative analysis of the results presented in Fig. 9 demonstrates a progressive change across the entire experimental group, confirming quantitative and qualitative changes in the indicators set out on DPA6. "Adaptation to progressive changes".

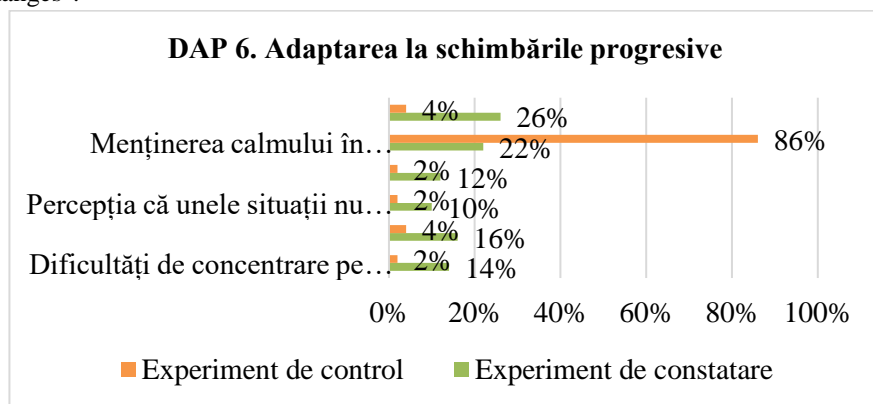


Figure 9. Comparative frequency distribution of indicators on DPA6. “Adaptation to progressive changes”

The comparative analysis of the data in Fig. 9 demonstrates a significant reduction in the number of NTs who showed a clear lack of flexibility, from 26% recorded in the observation experiment to 4% in the control experiment. We also note that, if in the observation experiment the number of novices who remained calm in difficult situations was 22%, in the control experiment we attest a significant increase to 86%. This increase positively influenced the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment. The result indicates an increased efficiency of the Mentoring Program, contributing positively to the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process.

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the experimental results represented in Fig. 10 highlights the dynamics of the changes that resulted after the implementation of the *Mentoring Program* from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of the NTs in the school environment.

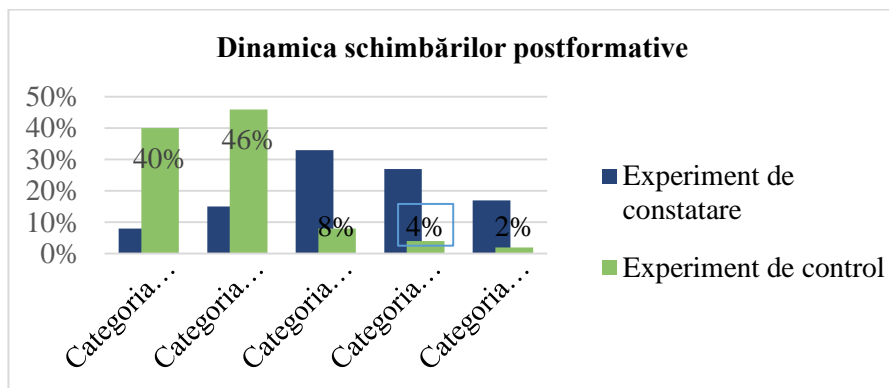


Figure 10. Comparative distribution of categories of resistance to progressive changes in relation to the level of professional adaptation

The comparative distribution of the results in Fig. 10 allows us to conclude that following the application of the *Mentoring Program*, a significantly dynamic reconfiguration of the optimization of the professional adaptation process of the NTs in the school environment is attested. Therefore, in the ascertaining experiment, the distribution of respondents indicated a *predominance of medium and low levels of professional adaptation*. As a result of the implementation of the *Mentoring Program*, the share of respondents in *Category I. Minimum resistance – High level of professional adaptation* increased from 8% to 40%. Comparatively, *Category II. Low resistance – High level of professional adaptation* recorded an increase from 15% to 46%. Therefore, 86% of respondents demonstrated a high level of professional adaptation, confirming the positive impact of the *Mentoring Program* from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of the NTs in the school environment. In parallel, the categories characterized by high resistance and maximum resistance experienced significant decreases: *Category III. Medium resistance – Average level of professional adaptation* decreased from 33% to 8%; *Category IV. High resistance – Low level of professional adaptation* decreased from 27% to 4%; *Category V. Maximum resistance – Low level of professional adaptation* decreased from 17% to 2%. The results confirm the effectiveness of the *Mentoring Program* from the perspective of optimizing the process of adaptation of NTs in the school environment.

The analysis of the data presented in Fig. 11 reveals significant changes across the entire experimental group. Thus, in the observation experiment, 44% of the NTs had a low level of professional adaptation (PA). A significant reduction in this percentage was achieved in the control experiment, with only 6% of respondents having a low level of PA. We also notice an important difference in the average level of professional adaptation: 33% of participants in the observation experiment reached this level, compared to only 8% in the control experiment. The data attest to a positive post-formative evolution, most visible at the high level of professional adaptation. The percentage of respondents who reached this level increased significantly, from 23% recorded in the observation experiment, to 86% in the control experiment.

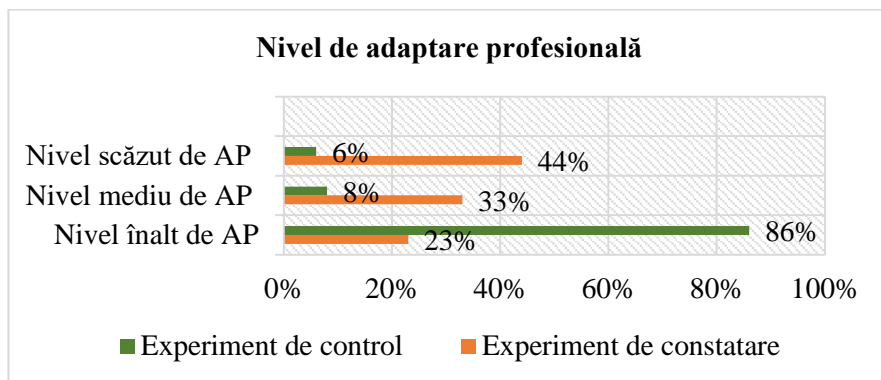


Figure 11. Comparative distribution of the level of professional adaptation

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The deductive analysis of the presented study emphasizes the importance of optimizing the NTs adaptation process, summarizing the following general conclusions:

1. In a comprehensive analytical framework, scientific arguments were formulated for the epistemological substantiation and identification of theoretical and methodological benchmarks regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment. Following the analysis of the concepts of *optimization*, *professional adaptation*, *mentoring*, *novice teachers*, *school environment*, it was established that the optimization of professional adaptation represents a dynamic process of evolution, either actively initiated or imposed by circumstances, through which NTs must improve their position in the school environment, assuming skills for change, learning and development. The generalization of the conceptual framework of the research allowed us to find that the implementation of a Proactive Pedagogical Model and a Mentoring Program would provide individualized support, guidance and models of good practices, thus contributing to preventing maladaptation, remedying the difficulties encountered and capitalizing on the potential of the novice.

2. In the context of the comparative analysis of national and international policies for the optimal professional adaptation of NTs the need to create a coherent strategic framework was identified. Arguments were made that justify the development of specialized mentoring programs to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment.

3. The analysis of national and international theoretical guidelines has demonstrated that optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment is a complex and dynamic process, influenced by various individual, organizational, socio-professional and socioeconomic factors. Career and professional development theories have been systematized to synthesize the perspectives of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment. 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA) have been identified and analyzed, including an analysis of the factors and indicators preset for each dimension.

4. Based on assessment methods and adaptation strategies, we determined that optimizing the professional adaptation process for NTs requires a combination of individual strategies from the

categories: *cognitive, emotional, behavioral and proactive*. Arguments have been made that the optimal adaptation process is a *continuous cycle of assessment-support-evaluation, where the mentor has a fundamental supporting role*. Support models and practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process were analyzed: *The explanatory-interpretive model of the employee in the organizational environment, the concern-based adoption model, the adaptation model* proposed by R. Lazarus and S. Folkman, *the career construction adaptation model* (CCMA), *Theory of Work Adjustment Minnesota Model* (TWA).

5. Based on the analyzed support models and practices, the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* was conceptualized and designed to optimize the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment (Fig. 1), with the aim of developing the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* to provide mentors and NTs with a graphic representation, structured in 4 stages, in relation to the factors and indicators necessary to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment. The structure of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* represents a flexible system, meant to be adjusted to the evolution of the professional adaptation needs of NTs.

6. The experimental sample was presented and the evaluation instruments were described: Questionnaire 1 *Evaluation of the level of professional adaptation in relation to the pre-established dimensions and indicators* (Translated and validated by E. Țărnă after AA Rean and AP Cudașev [73]); Questionnaire 2 *Professional adaptation to progressive changes in the school environment* (Adapted and validated by E. Țărnă after A. Chelcea [6]). The investigative action plan was presented, identifying eight dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA1-8), the factors and indicators pre-established for each dimension.

7. The dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTs in the school environment were experimentally investigated. The results of the ascertaining experiment revealed that the majority of NTs face significant difficulties for all the nominated indicators, on each of the 8 DPAs. For example, 37% of NTs feel intense fatigue at work; 28% are nervous when they have to make quick decisions (DPA1); 28% of NTs feel insecure about the effective performance of work tasks (DPA4); 36% of NTs have difficulties in establishing effective relationships and managing conflicts, which indicates a significant obstacle to optimizing the professional adaptation process (DPA5); 22% of NTs cannot be calm in tense situations, which negatively affects the optimization of the professional adaptation process, since new roles and work environments can generate stress and uncertainty (DPA6). It was found that 67% of the NTS very often anticipate major difficulties in the process of professional adaptation to the progressive changes in the school environment in the absence of a mentor, while 22% feel this need often. The findings provided a clear picture of the level of professional adaptation of the NTs in the school environment: low level - 44%; medium level - 33%; high level - 23%, emphasizing the imperative of implementing the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*.

8. By implementing the *Mentoring Program*, we aimed to optimize the professional adaptation process in the school environment of the 97 NTs, with the support of 20 mentors, providing them with theoretical and applied support. *The Mentoring Program* was developed based on the analyzed national and international scientific resources, based on the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* and the deductions resulting from the detailed findings of the level of professional adaptation. *The Mentoring Program* includes a description of the selection of

mentors and the work portfolio. The program included 20 workshops organized for the 20 mentors and the 97 NTs involved, conducted 12 mentoring sessions, in working groups. The thematic structure of the mentoring sessions was based on the 8 DPAs, on the factors and indicators pre-established for optimizing the professional adaptation process.

9. The implementation of *the Mentoring Program* resulted in changes at the experimental group level, demonstrating a dynamic of optimizing the professional adaptation process of the NTs on the 8 DPAs. For example, Post-training results demonstrated significant improvements in the *emotional and physical well-being of novice teachers* (DPA1). There were notable decreases in fatigue (from 37% to 16%) and nervousness when making quick decisions (from 28% to 14%). The majority of NTs demonstrated a high level of energy, calmness and emotional resilience, which increased exponentially, from 6% to 62%, confirming the effectiveness of the mentoring program. Comparative data analysis demonstrated a reduction in the number of NTs who recorded deviations from work tasks, from 16% (observation experiment) to 4% (control experiment) and of NTs who showed a clear lack of flexibility, from 26% recorded in the observation experiment to 4% in the control experiment (DPA6). Following the application of the Mentoring Program, a dynamic reconfiguration of the professional adaptation process of NTs was identified. The share of NTs in Category I. Minimal resistance - High level of professional adaptation increased from 8% to 40%. And Category II. Low resistance - High level of professional adaptation recorded an increase from 15% to 46%. Thus, 86% of NTs demonstrated a high level of professional adaptation, confirming the positive impact of the *Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*, developed based on the Proactive Pedagogical Model.

10. The scientific problem of the research was solved by developing and validating *the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers*, based on the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* (Fig. 1). Finally, we must mention that no matter how rigorous a research is, it cannot avoid *certain limitations*, such as the small sample size (97 NTs and 20 mentors) or *external validity* (school management, colleagues, personal situation), but these limitations do not invalidate the fundamental value of the study, but only emphasize the importance of interpreting the research results.

RECOMMENDATION

- *Suggestions for potential future research directions:*

1. **Organizing a longitudinal study** would allow us to identify the professional evolution of the same NTs over 5 years of activity, assessing whether the high level of professional adaptation and the positive changes on DPA1-8 obtained in the experiment are maintained or vary.

2. **Organizing a comparative research** would allow us to test the effectiveness of the Proactive Pedagogical Model and the *Mentoring Program* in schools with different profiles (e.g., rural versus urban schools, schools with high versus low academic performance).

- *Proposals for the use of the results obtained in the socio-cultural and economic fields:*

3. The proactive pedagogical model and the Mentoring Program can be adapted and expanded into other socio-cultural and professional fields to support young people, volunteers, etc.

4. The expansion and implementation of the *Proactive Pedagogical Model* and the *Mentoring Program* in companies could optimize both the adaptation and integration of new employees, reducing staff turnover, recruitment costs and professional training, thus developing a mentoring culture and contributing to a stable economy.

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ANNOTATION

GORAȘ Mariana, "Optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment", doctoral thesis in educational sciences, Chișinău, 2025

Thesis structure: introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography (163 sources), annotations (Romanian and English), 7 annexes, 145 pages of basic text, 27 figures, 10 tables, list of abbreviations. The results obtained are published in 16 scientific papers.

Keywords: optimization, adaptation, professional adaptation, novice teachers, school environment, mentor, mentoring, dimensions of professional adaptation, factors, indicators, optimization of the professional adaptation process.

Field of study: General theory of education

Research purpose consists of the theoretical and methodological conceptualization, development and validation of the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment.

Research objectives: epistemological analysis and identification of theoretical and methodological benchmarks regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; evaluation and synthesis of support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; conceptualization and design of the Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; experimental investigation of the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; validation of the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers

The scientific novelty and originality of the research: theoretical and methodological substantiation regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; evaluation and synthesis of support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; conceptualization and valorization of the Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers; development and experimental validation of the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

Principal scientific results are recorded in: the design of the Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers; the synthesis of mentoring practices regarding the optimization of the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment; the experimental determination of the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment and the validation of the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

Theoretical significance of the research consists of: defining the concept of optimizing the professional adaptation process; comparative analysis of national and international policies for the professional adaptation of teachers; identifying the theoretical benchmarks necessary to optimize the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment; designing the Proactive Pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers; identifying 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DAP) and their specific indicators; synthesizing support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment; developing the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment.

The applied value of research: ascertaining the level of professional adaptation in relation to the DPA and the pre-established indicators; establishing the categories of resistance to change in the school environment and correlating them with the level of professional adaptation; experimental investigation of the dynamics of optimizing the professional adaptation process of NTS in the school environment; validating the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

Implementation of scientific results was carried out as part of the pedagogical experiment, carried out in primary and secondary general education institutions in 16 districts and 2 municipalities of the Republic of Moldova, with the participation of 117 respondents; 97 novice teachers and 20 mentors.

ANNOTATION

GORAȘ Mariana "Optimization of the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment". Thesis of doctor in educational sciences, Chisinau, 2025.

Thesis structure: Introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography (163 sources), annotations (Romanian and English), 7 appendices, 145 pages of core text, 27 figures, 10 tables, list of abbreviations. The results obtained are published in 16 scientific papers.

Keywords: optimization, adaptation, professional adaptation, novice teachers, school environment, mentor, mentoring, dimensions of professional adaptation, factors, indicators, optimization of the professional adaptation process.

Field of study: General Theory of Education.

Investigation purpose of the research is to conceptualize theoretically and methodologically, develop and validate the Mentoring Program from the perspective of optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment.

Research objectives: epistemological analysis and identification of theoretical and methodological benchmarks for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; evaluation and synthesis of support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; conceptualization and design of a proactive pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; experimental investigation of the dynamics of the professional adaptation process for novice teachers in the school environment; validation of the Mentoring Program for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

Scientific novelty and originality of the research: theoretical and methodological foundation for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; valuation and synthesis of support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; conceptualization and utilization of a proactive pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers; development and experimental validation of the Mentoring Program for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

Main scientific results are reflected in: the design of a proactive pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers; the synthesis of mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; the experimental determination of the dynamics for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; the validation of the Mentoring Program for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

Theoretical significance of the research: defining the concept of optimizing the professional adaptation process; comparative analysis of national and international policies for the professional adaptation of teachers; identification of theoretical benchmarks necessary for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; the design of a proactive pedagogical Model for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers; the identification of 8 dimensions of professional adaptation (DPA) and their specific indicators; the synthesis of support models and mentoring practices for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment; the development of the Mentoring Program for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers in the school environment.

Applied value of the research: determining the level of professional adaptation based on the pre-established DPAs and indicators; establishing the categories of resistance to change in the school environment and correlating them with the level of professional adaptation; experimental investigation of the dynamics of the professional adaptation process for novice teachers in the school environment; validation of the Mentoring Program for optimizing the professional adaptation process of novice teachers.

The implementation of the scientific results was carried out within a pedagogical experiment, conducted in primary and secondary general education institutions from 16 districts and 2 municipalities of the Republic of Moldova, with the participation of 117 respondents: 97 novice teachers and 20 mentors.

MARIANA GORAȘ

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